

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 184571
ORIGIN SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 R

DRAFTED BY EUR/EE:DNJOHNSON:DJW

APPROVED BY EUR :W.H. LUERS

H - MR. AT OOD

EUR/EE:CWSCHMIDT

PM - MR. GEIS

S/S-O:AWOTTO

S-O:AWOTTO

-----003018 060534Z /13

P 060147Z AUG 77

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 184571

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, YO, ET

SUBJECT: YUGOSLAV DIVERSION OF M-47 TANKS TO ETHIOPIA

REF: BELGRADE 4970

1. THE ACTING SECRETARY TODAY SENT LETTERS, CLASSIFIED SECRET, TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE AND TO THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES NOTIFYING THEM OF THE YUGOSLAV TRANSFER OF TANKS TO ETHIOPIA. FULL TEXT OF THE IDENTICAL LETTERS FOLLOWS:

DEAR MR. SPEAKER (MR. CHAIRMAN):

--- I AM PROVIDING THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION PURSUANT
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 184571

TO SECTIONS 3(C) AND 3(E) OF THE ARMS EXPORT CONTROL
ACT.

--- THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE RECENTLY RECEIVED INFORMATION THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF YUGOSLAVIA TRANSFERRED SEVENTY M-47 TANKS TO THE GOVERNMENT OF ETHIOPIA IN MAY 1977 WITHOUT HAVING FIRST OBTAINED THE CONSENT OF THE UNITED

STATES GOVERNMENT. AT THE TIME THE TRANSFER OCCURRED,
THE UNITED STATES HAD SUSPENDED MILITARY SALES AND

DELIVERIES TO ETHIOPIA. ACCORDINGLY, WE WOULD NOT HAVE
APPROVED THIS TRANSFER HAD OUR CONSENT BEEN REQUESTED.

--- THESE TANKS WERE ORIGINALLY FURNISHED TO YUGOSLAVIA
IN THE 1950'S AS PART OF THE UNITED STATES' MILITARY
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM PURSUANT TO THE BILATERAL MUTUAL
DEFENSE ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT OF APRIL 17, 1951 (TIAS 2245).
THAT AGREEMENT PROVIDED IN PART THAT ASSISTANCE FURNISHED
THEREUNDER WOULD NOT BE TRANSFERRED "TO ANY OTHER NATION...
WITHOUT THE PRIOR CONSENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA." ALTHOUGH THAT AGREEMENT IS
NO LONGER IN FORCE, THE UNDERTAKING IN QUESTION WAS PRE-
SERVED BY PARAGRAPH 2(B) OF THE AGREEMENT OF AUGUST 25,
1959, RELATING TO THE TERMINATION OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE
FURNISHED ON A GRANT BASIS (TIAS 4300).

--- ON JULY 8 OUR AMBASSADOR IN BELGRADE MADE A STRONG
PROTEST TO THE YUGOSLAV GOVERNMENT ON THIS MATTER AND
I DISCUSSED IT AT LENGTH WITH FOREIGN MINISTER MINIC
ON JULY 20. IN BOTH OF THESE CONVERSATIONS, WE EM-
PHASIZED THE GRAVITY WITH WHICH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT
VIEWS THIS MATTER AND ASKED THE YUGOSLAVS FOR A FULL
EXPLANATION. TO ITS CREDIT, THE YUGOSLAV GOVERNMENT
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 184571

MADE NO ATTEMPT TO COVER UP THE TANK TRANSFER. THE
FOREIGN MINISTER TOLD ME IT HAD BEEN A MISTAKE WHICH
OCCURRED BECAUSE THE YUGOSLAVS HAD MISUNDERSTOOD THE
NEED TO SEEK PRIOR U.S. GOVERNMENT CONSENT TO TRANSFER
THE OLD TANKS WHICH WERE NO LONGER IN THE YUGOSLAV IN-
VENTORY AND IN A LARGELY UNSERVICEABLE CONDITION. THE
FOREIGN MINISTER GAVE HIS ASSURANCE TO BOTH THE AMBASSA-
DOR AND ME THAT YUGOSLAVIA HAD ALWAYS LIVED UP TO ITS
OBLIGATIONS UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE U.S., THAT IT WAS
SORRY THERE HAD BEEN A PROBLEM IN THIS CASE, AND THAT
NO TRANSFERS OF AFFECTED EQUIPMENT WOULD TAKE PLACE IN
THE FUTURE WITHOUT PRIOR U.S. CONSENT. HE EXPRESSED A
DESIRE TO HOLD DISCUSSIONS WITH US TO ENSURE THAT THE
FUTURE DISPOSITION OF OLD U.S. MATERIEL PROVIDED UNDER
THE LONG-DEFUNCT MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM WOULD
BE CARRIED OUT IN A MUTUALLY AGREED FASHION.

--- HAVING RECEIVED THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S ASSURANCES
AND IN VIEW OF THE OBSOLESCENCE OF THE EQUIPMENT IN-
VOLVED, WE ARE NOT RECOMMENDING TO THE PRESIDENT THAT
HE DETERMINE, PURSUANT TO SECTION 3(C) (3) OF THE ARMS
EXPORT CONTROL ACT, THAT A "SUBSTANTIAL VIOLATION" OF

THE GOVERNING AGREEMENT HAS TAKEN PLACE. WE ARE NOW
ASSEMBLING A DELEGATION TO GO TO BELGRADE TO DEVELOP

NEW GUIDELINES FOR THE DISPOSAL OF U.S. EQUIPMENT. UNTIL
THIS REVIEW IS COMPLETED TO OUR SATISFACTION, WE ARE
DEFERRING ACTION ON PENDING YUGOSLAV REQUESTS UNDER THE
FOREIGN MILITARY SALES PROGRAM.

--- IN RESPONDING TO THIS INCIDENT I BELIEVE WE HAVE
TAKEN THE NECESSARY STEPS TO EMPHASIZE THE NEED FOR
YUGOSLAVIA TO SCRUPULOUSLY OBSERVE THE TERMS AND CON-
DITIONS UNDER WHICH THE U.S. FURNISHES DEFENSE ARMS
AND SERVICES. FOR THIS REASON, AND SO AS NOT TO IMPAIR
THE ABILITY OF THE UNITED STATES TO STRENGTHEN U.S.-
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 184571

YUGOSLAV RELATIONS IN THE PERIOD AHEAD, WE ARE HANDLING
THIS MATTER ON A CLASSIFIED BASIS.

--- SINCERELY, WARREN CHRISTOPHER, ACTING SECRETARY. CHRISTOPHER

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: US CONGRESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS, SECURITY VIOLATIONS, MILITARY EXERCISES, TANKS (COMBAT VEHICLES)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 06-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE184571
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: DNJOHNSON:DJW
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770282-0535
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770889/aaaacxog.tel
Line Count: 140
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 883ee360-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 77 BELGRADE 4970
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1686159
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: YUGOSLAV DIVERSION OF M-47 TANKS TO ETHIOPIA
TAGS: MASS, YO, ET
To: BELGRADE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/883ee360-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009